

REMARKS

Claims 9–13, 28–32 are pending. Claims 9–13, 28, and 29 are allowed. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Allowable Claims 9–13, 28, and 29

Applicants note the indication of allowance of claims 9-13, 28, and 29. In addition, and for the reasons set forth hereafter, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are directed to allowable subject matter and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e), Claims 30–32

Claims 30–32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Lin et al. (US Publication No. 2002/0058409) filed on October 11, 2001. This rejection is traversed because the Lin reference is not prior art to the present application.

Claims 30–32 are fully supported by the disclosure in parent application 09/358,983 which was filed July 22, 1999. The ‘983 application discloses an example embodiment that provides support for the claims: “[T]he *formation of* an opening such as a hole or *trench* ... in the surface of an integrated circuit. Most commonly, said surface will be that of a *dielectric* layer.” ‘983 application-as-filed, at 6. “Next, ... a *barrier* layer of a material such as *tantalum*, *tantalum nitride*, *titanium nitride*, or *tungsten nitride* is laid down.” *Id.* “[A] *seed layer of metal* ... is next laid down to cover the inside surfaces of the trench or hole.” *Id.* “[T]he *removal of a certain amount of the seed layer*...” *Id.* at 7. “Because of shadowing effects, material from the seed layer is preferentially *removed from the overhanging portion* at the mouth of the trench or hole.” *Id.* “[T]he *opening may be filled*, using a deposition technique such as electroplating, and then over-filled.” *Id.* at 9.

Because Claims 30–32 are fully supported by the Applicants’ initial disclosure in the ‘983 application, they are entitled to a priority date of July 22, 1999. Therefore, the rejection of claims 30–32 is not supported by the Lin reference and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

An early formal notice of allowance of claims 9–13, and 28–32 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



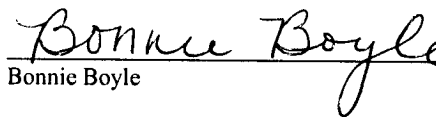
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